

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 NOUAKC 00795 01 OF 02 281316Z

43

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-09 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03

H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 PC-01 IO-10 /088 W

----- 075596

P R 261200Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3688

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS MO

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 NOUAKCHOTT 0795

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS PINT MR

SUBJECT: DISQUIETING INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS

SUMMARY: SERIES OF DISQUIETING INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS HAVE OCCURRED RECENTLY IN MAURITANIA AND ARE BEING AMPLIFIED BY NOUAKCHOTT RUMOR MILL. WHILE OUR CONCLUSIONS CAN ONLY BE TENTATIVE AT THIS STAGE, IT APPEARS AS IF DEGREE OF MALAISE HAS FOR THE MOMENT OVERTAKEN MAURITANIAN BODY POLITIC. WE DO NOT SEE ANY IMMEDIATE CRUNCH AHEAD. NEVERTHELESS, SITUATION MERITS CLOSE ATTENTION. AS PACE OF POLITICAL MANEUVERING PICKS UP ON EVE OF PARTY CONGRESS (JULY 1), WE WILL OBSERVE ESPECIALLY CLOSELY AND MAKE MAJOR EFFORT IN WEEKS AHEAD TO SORT FACT FROM SPICY POLITICAL RUMOR. END SUMMARY

1. ACCORDING TO OFFICIAL NEWS SHEET, NOUAKCHOTT INFORMATION, PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH DECLARED DURING APRIL 17-18 SESSION OF COUNCIL OF MINISTERS THAT "PARTY AND GOVERNMENT ARE DETERMINED TO COMBAT WITHOUT FAIL ALL SEPARATIST TENDENCIES WHICH, UNDER THE NAMES OF
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 NOUAKC 00795 01 OF 02 281316Z

REGIONALISM AND TRIBALISM CAN ONLY WORK AGAINST NATION

BUILDING." COUNCIL OF MINISTERS ALSO ANNOUNCED REPLACEMENT OF ONE GOVERNOR, TWO DEPUTY GOVERNORS, AND ONE PREFECT, ALL OF WHOM HAD ASSUMED THEIR POSTS WITHIN PAST THREE MONTHS.

2. EMBASSY HAS DETERMINED THROUGH VARIETY OF SOURCES THAT OULD DADDAH'S REFERENCE TO GRIBALISM STEMS DIRECTLY FROM HIS CONCERN OVER "TRIBAL MEETING" WHICH TOOK PLACE APRIL 7 NEAR TWON OF ROSSO ON SENEGAL RIVER. SOME 2,000 PEOPLE REPRESENTING TRIBESMEN OF TRARZA AREA, WHICH CORRESPONDS ROUGHLY WITH 6TH REGION (NOUAKCHOTT A-11), HELD MAJOR CONCLAVE BILLED AS TRIBAL RECONCILIATION SESSION. MEETING REPORTEDLY TOOK ON POLITICAL OVERTONES WHICH ANGERED PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH. FOUR REGIONAL OFFICIALS ENNUMBERED ABOVE WERE FIRED FOR THEIR PARTICIPATION AT OR CONDONING OF ROSSO MEETING, AFTER (ACCORDING TO SOME VERSIONS) HAVING DECLINED TO PLACE MEETING UNDER AUSPICES OF COUNTRY'S SINGLE POLITICAL PARTY AND SUBSEQUENTLY (ACCORDING TO OTHER VERSIONS) AFTER HAVING BEEN COUNSELED BY PRESIDENT NOT TO BECOME INVOLVED. RUMORS ABOUND THAT LARGE NUMBER OF ADDITIONAL OFFICIALS (UP TO KLTPL WEREOPCEJIFOLTAKYG PART OR WDDE FORMALLY DISCIPLINED FOR HAVING ATTENDED ROSSO SESSION. EMBASSY HAS BEEN UNABLE TO CONFIRM FURTHER DISMISSALS, AND SUSPECTS, RATHER, THAT ORAL WARNINGS WERE ISSUED TO OTHER INDIVIDUALS.

3. DURING PAST TWO MONTHS PRESIDENT HAS REPORTEDLY CRITICIZED CIVIL SERVANTS FOR USING GOVERNMENT VEHICLES FOR PRIVATE USE AND ABUSING OTHER PRIVILEGES. GIRM RECENTLY ISSUED DECREE PROHIBITING SENIOR OFFICIALS FROM LIVING IN GOVERNMENT-PROVIDED HOUSES WHILE RENTING OUT THEIR OWN HOMES AT STAGGERING PRICES. PRESIDENT HAS ALSO REPORTEDLY BECOME DISTURBED BY GROWING LACK OF DEDICATION OF GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS. MEMOS COMMENTING ON THIS DETERIORATION IN ATTITUDE AND ON GENERAL LAXNESS, AND, IN ESSENCE, ASKING CIVIL SERVANTS TO PULL UP THEIR SOCKS, ARE APPARENTLY WITH INCREASING FREQUENCY--WITH NO APPARENT EFFECT, ACCORDING TO ONE WELL-PLACED MAURITANIAN SOURCE.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 NOUAKC 00795 01 OF 02 281316Z

4. SOUEDATT OULD OUEDATT, FORMERLY INSPECTEUR (READ COMMANDING OFFICER) OF THE NATIONAL GUARD, WAS ASSIGNED AROUND FIRST OF MARCH AS DEPUTY GOVERNOR OF 1ST REGION IN NEMA. IT IS GENERALLY ACCEPTED THAT SOUEDATT WAS EXILED TO NEMA AS PUNISHMENT FOR SOME TRANSGRESSION, PROBABLY FOR UNAUTHORIZED DISPOSITION OF NATIONAL GUARD EQUIPMENT. DURIMQUPAST WEEK, EMBASSY PICKED UP RUMOR WHICH NOW WIDESPREAD THAT SOUEDATT HAD BEEN PLACED

UNDER HOUSE ARREST IN NOUAKCHOTT. IT HAS NOT BEEN POSSIBLE, HOWEVER, TO CONFIRM RUMOR. MOREOVER, SEVERAL GOOD SOURCES DENY SOUEDATT IS UNDER DETENTION.

5. ABOUT SEVEN DAYS AGO, SEVERAL WELL-INFORMED PERSONS REPORTED THAT MINISTER OF ROAD, HASNI OULD DIDI, HAD BEEN PLACED UNDER HOUSE ARREST WHILE LBVERNMENT INVESTIGATED ALLEGED FINANCIAL SPECULATION (WHICH SOME SAY INVOLVED SPECIAL FAVORS FOR MIFERMA) REPORTEDLY DATING BACK TO TIME HE WAS GOVERNOR OF 8TH REGION. WHETHER OR NOT DIDI WAS ACTUALLY UNDER HOUSE ARREST, IT IS GENERALLY BELIEVED THAT INVESTIGATION WAS CARRIED OUT. ON APRIL 21 ROAD MINISTER BEGAN EXTENSIVE ORIENTATION TRIP WITHIN MAURITANIA, PROVING THAT HE IS NOT NOW AT LEAST UNDER HOUSE ARREST.

6. PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH WAS SHAKEN BY COUP IN CHAD (NOUAKCHOTT 758). FOLLOWING HIS RETURN TO NOUAKCHOTT FROM NDJAMENA HE DID NOT APPEAR IN HIS OFFICE AT THE PRESIDENCY ON AT LEAST TWO WORKING DAYS. ALTHOUGH THERE MAY BE GOOD EXPLANATION, PRESIDENT'S ABSENCE WAS MOST UNUSUAL AND WAS WIDELY NOTED AT UPPER MIDDLE LEVELS OF BUREAUCRACY.

7. OULD DADDAH DEPARTED APRIL 23 FOR FIVE DAY VISIT TO TOGO. SINCE HIS DEPARTURE, NOUAKCHOTT HASEEN UNDER TIGHTER SECURITY THAN NORMAL. FRIENDLY DIPLOMAT REPORTED, FOR EXAMPLE, HAVING OBSERVED THREE EVENINGS AGO TWO LANDROVER TYPE VEHICLES EACH WITH FOUR HELMETED

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 NOUAKC 00795 02 OF 02 281302Z

43

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-09 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03

H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 PC-01 IO-10 /088 W

----- 075383

P R 261200Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3689

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY BAMAKO
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY RABAT

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 NOUAKCHOTT 0795

TROOPERS ARMED WITH MACHINE GUNS PATROLLING ROADS NEAR ONE OF CAPITAL'S REFUGEE CAMPS. TROOPS HAVE ALSO BEEN SEEN BY EMBASSY OFFICER AT PRESIDENTIAL OFFICES, APPARENTLY TO AUGMENT NORMALLY ASSIGNED GUARD.

8. COMMENT: PUBLIC CONDEMNATION OF TRIBALISM BY CHIEF OF STATE IS VERY RARE ACTION. EMBASSY STAFF CAN RECALL NO OCCASION IN PAST TWO YEARS WHEN OULD DADDAH VOICED SUCH CRITICISM IN PUBLIC. GOVERNMENT'S VIGOROUS RESPONSE TO ROSSO MEETING CONFIRMS PRESIDENT IS VERY MCUH AWARE OF BASIC CLEAVAGES IN MAURITANIAN SOCIETY AND DEMONSTRATES ONCE AGAIN HIS SENSITIVITY TO ACTIONS WHICH HIGHLIGHT OR EXACERBATE DIVISIONS. THE SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES THROUGH TRIBAL COUNCILS IS PARTICULARLY GAILLING FOR PRESIDENT WHO CREATED NATIONAL APRTY AS SUBSTITUTE FOR TRADITIONAL POLITICS AND WHO HAS MOUNTED MAJOR CAMPAIGN IN LAST SEPERAL MONTHSHD REORGANIZE AND REINDOCTRINATE PARTY CADRE.

VERY TENTATIVE CONCLUSION WE DRAW FROM HANDFUL OF HARD FACTS AND WELTER OF RUMOR IS THAT A DEGREE OF CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 NOUAKC 00795 02 OF 02 281302Z

MALAISE HAS FOR MOMENT OVERTAKEN MAURITANIAN BODY POLITIC. AFTER TWO YEARS OF CALM, IT WOULD APPEAR THAT THE HIGHLY INDIVIDUALISTIC CHARACTER OF THIS SOCIETY IS BEGINNING TO COME TO THE SURFACE ONCE AGAIN, THUS CHALLENGING PRESIDENT'S EFFORTS TO IMPOSE THE PARTY'S COMMONALITY OF VIEW. PRESIDENT THUS HAS PROBLEM ON HIS HANDS WHICH IS GOING TO REQUIRE MORE THAN PUBLIC EXHORTATION AND INTERNAL MEMOS TO CIVIL SERVANTS, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF QUICKENING PACE OF POLITICAL ACTIVITY INSPIRED BY THE RAPIDLY APPROACHING PARTY CONGRESS, THE FIRST IN FIVE YEARS. PRESIDENT MAY TRY TO DEAL WITH SITUATION BY SHAKING UP TOP LEVELS OF GOVERNEMTN AND BY GENERAL HOUSE CLEANING BEFORE OR DURING JULY 1 PARTY CONFERENCE. HE MAY EVEN MAKE EXAMPLE OF CERTAIN KEY OFFENDERS. ON OTHER HAND, HE MAY LET SITUATION SIMMER IN HOPES THAT PROBLEMS WILL RESOLVE THEMSELVES AND DIFFICULTIES WILL DISAPPEAR UNAIDED.

ON BASIS OF INFORMATION NOW AVAILABLE, WE DO NOT

RPT NOT BELIEVE THAT CURRENT UNEASINESS WILL DEVELOP INTO POLITICAL CRUNCH, PARTICULARS IF PRESIDENT DEMONSTRATES OVER NEXT THREE MONTHS THE OBVIOUS POLITICAL SKILL AND DEFT TO A H WHICH HAS KEPT HIM AT HEAD WQF MAURITANIAN GOVERNMENT AND NATION FOR EIGHTEEN YEARS.

BUT HE IS AN OLDER AND CLEARLY MORE TIRED MAN, AND HE MUST DEAL WITH A NEW AND GROWING GROUP OF BRIGHT, EDUCATED, VIGOROUS YOUNG MAURITANIANS. MOREOVER, HE FACES A MOUNTING INVENTORY OF TOUGH DOMESTIC PROBLEMS WHICH WILL PROVE MUCH MORE RESISTANT TO RESOLUTION THAN THE FOREIGN POLICY CHALLENGES OF THE PAST FIFTEEN YEARS.

WHILE WE DO NOT BELIEVE THERE IS A CONFRONTATION JUST AROUND THE CORNER, SITUATION MERITS CLOSE ATTENTION. WE WILL OBSERVE ESPECIALLY CLOSELY THESE NEXT FEW WEEKS, AND ATTEMPT TO SORT FACT FROM SPICY POLITICAL RUMOR. POLITICAL GOSSIP CIRCULATES WITH ASTONISHING RAPIDITY ON A VIRTUALLY CONTINUING BASIS IN THIS SMALL TOWN. TASK OF PENETRATING PROTECTIVE SCREEN THAT NORMALLY SURROUNDS DOMESTIC CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 NOUAKC 00795 02 OF 02 281302Z

POLITICAL ACTIVITY, WHICH IS VIEWED AS PRIVATE FAMILY MATTER, AND OF SORTING FACT FROM FICTION WILL SURELY BECOME INCREASINGLY MORE DIFFICULT AS PACE OF POLITICAL MANEUVERING PICKS UP ON EVE OF PARTY CONGRESS. HANDYSIDE

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, POLITICAL SITUATION, PARTY MEETINGS, REORGANIZATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 APR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: buchandr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975NOUAKC00795
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750148-0335
From: NOUAKCHOTT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750413/aaaaalwb.tel
Line Count: 255
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: buchandr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21 MAY 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <06 OCT 2003 by buchandr>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DISQUIETING INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS SUMMARY: SERIES OF DISQUIETING INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS
TAGS: PINS, PINT, MR, (DADDAH, OULD)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006